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ABSTRACT

The media center is generally one of the larger units of the school plant in which all students and teachers spend some time each day; therefore, effort should be made to create a pleasant and visually attractive learning environment. The purpose of this guide is to furnish established, tested guidelines for the planning and construction of efficient and effective media centers. (Author/MLF)

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A Guide for Planning and Construction of Public School Facilities in Georgia

Media Center Facilities

EA

A GUIDE FOR PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES IN GEORGIA

This publication is printed as a series of booklets. Titles included in the series are listed below:

Laws, General Policies and Procedures

Site Selection and Development

General Design and Construction Standards and Sanitation Design Criteria

Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning, Electrical and Lighting

Early Childhood and Elementary General Purpose Instructional Units

Middle School, Junior High and Senior High General Purpose Instructional Units

Administrative and Support Services Facilities

Media Center Facilities

Fine Art and Music Facilities

Auditoriums, Little Theater, Speech and Drama Laboratory

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Vocational Facilities I – Home Economics and Distributive Education

Vocational Facilities II – Industrial Arts and Business Education

Vocational Facilities III – Trade and Industrial

Vocational Facilities IV – Agriculture

Specialized Instructional Units

Other Specialized Instructional Units

Furnishings and Equipment

A Guide for Planning and Construction of Public School Facilities in Georgia

Office of Administrative Services
Georgia Department of Education
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Jack P. Nix
State Superintendent of Schools
1976

Media Center Facilities

FOREWORD

A very important component of any school plant is the media center, which houses and makes available all forms of media used by the students and faculty of the school and provides expertise in their use.

The well planned, properly staffed media center houses, organizes and encourages maximum use of books, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, pictures, paintings, maps, globes, recordings, films, filmstrips, slides and other audiovisual materials and equipment.

The media center and its staff serves teachers by providing all types of commercially prepared or locally produced media suitable for educational activities of pupils and assisting teachers in the selection, use and circulation to classrooms of such media.

Students are served directly by the media center and its staff, which provide the kinds of media needed for group and individual study as well as research projects, personal satisfaction and development.

The media center should be designed in accordance with the philosophy and instructional program of the school and should incorporate maximum flexibility for both use and expansion. The design study should include complete layout of all equipment and furnishings envisioned for its operation.

This guide is a publication of the Georgia Department of Education under the direction of School Plant Services in cooperation with the Media Field Services Section of the Instructional Resources Unit of the Division of Educational Media Services. Its purpose is to furnish established, tested guidelines for the planning and construction of media centers (the main and related areas) that will provide the most efficient and effective facility possible for the school which it serves.

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GENERAL

Accessibility

The location of the school media center is extremely important since it may serve many separate functions. It needs to be reasonably near classrooms and departmental centers where it can be readily accessible to students that will be most frequently using the media available within the facility. This will also enable convenient distribution of equipment and material to the instructional spaces.

Changes in level between the media center and instructional spaces should be avoided when practical to facilitate circulation of media equipment on casters.

Consideration should be given to the use of the school media center by groups and individuals apart from regular school hours so that this unit can be operated as independently as possible from other elements of the total school without penalizing student use, diminishing security of the total plant or incorporating excessive costs.

Flexibility

The school media center should be designed with maximum flexibility and expandability so that during the many years of its life expectancy it can accommodate experimental developments, changes in media and concepts for usage. For any of the above reasons or for anticipated increase in school population, the center should be designed with provision for expansion with minimal cost and disruption of function. The possibility of unanticipated expansion should always be weighed in design of space and mechanical-electrical systems serving the center.

Environmental Factors

The media center is generally one of the larger units of the school plant in which all students and teachers should spend some time each day; therefore much effort should be made to create a pleasant and visually attractive environment conducive to learning maximum usage. Whether a part of a new building, addition to existing plant or just renovated space, attention must be given to the proportions of the main areas of the media center to avoid the long, narrow, low-ceiling spaces that are extremely undesirable from both the aesthetic and functional standpoint.

Selection of paint colors, furnishings and materials for floors, walls and ceilings should be carefully coordinated to produce lasting, harmonious, comfortable surroundings in which climate control, lighting, acoustics and maintenance factors have been given proper attention. Quality carpeting rates high from both an appearance and acoustical standpoint.

Traffic and Supervision

Although the media center should be designed to be highly visible and easily accessible to all, heavy disruptive traffic that penetrates or separates major elements of the center must be avoided.

Design of the center should provide supervisory personnel at their main work station with good visual control over the public areas of the center, including entrances and exits, reading room and stack areas.

Fenestration

Windows and glassed exterior wall surfaces should be avoided wherever possible for maximum use of wall space within the media center. Shelving beneath windows should be avoided unless the window sill is high enough above finish floor to permit continuous full height tiers.

COMPONENT SPACES

Reading, Viewing and Listening Spaces

The main space to be utilized for reading, viewing and listening should be sized in the following manner.

- Determine the ADA (Average Daily Attendance).
- Take 15 percent of ADA up to and including 500.
- Add 10 percent of ADA in excess of 500.
- Multiply this sum by 25 square feet to determine *minimum* area requirements.
- Multiply this sum by 35 to 40 square feet to determine *more desirable* area allotment.
- To determine *adequate* space in this area as well as other areas consult chapter seven of *Media Programs: District and School.*[1]

The minimum floor area for this space in any school media center shall be 1,000 square feet. The area of *media* conference rooms provided may be included as part of this required space.

Stack Space

The space for stacks must be computed separate from the main area although it should *not* be separated from the main area by partitions. In this area shelving may be doubled-faced and placed in rows with clear aisle space of four feet. For computing the amount of shelving which will dictate the amount of space, see section entitled *Shelving and Millwork – Casework* of this document. The stack area must be easily accessible to the user and designed to provide for effective supervision.

Workroom Space

All media centers must have a workroom of no less than 120 to 240 square feet. Running water and a work counter should be provided at one end of the workroom. Some work shelves should be provided. Office facilities for clerical staff should be provided in the workroom.

For larger schools with two or more clerical staff members additional space to house additional office furniture and equipment will be necessary. Additional space for processing and repairing materials will be needed for larger schools unless the system has a central processing unit.

Media Production and Electronics Distribution Area

There must be an area ranging from a minimum of 240 square feet to approximately 750 square feet in every media center suite for the use of media staff, teachers and students in production of media. Types of media production this space should be designed to accommodate include copy stand work;

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[1] *Media Programs: District and School.* American Association of School Librarians, ALA, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611, and Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1201 Sixteenth Street, Northwest, Washington, D. C. 20036. 1975. $2.00.

duplicating of slides; mounting and laminating; duplicating by multilith, ditto, xerox, photostatting, mimeographing and other machines. For a more detailed list of equipment that should be accommodated, refer to chapter six of *Media Programs: District and School.*[2]

The media production center should be designed with ample cabinet and drawer space, work counters containing sink with hot and cold water. The space should accommodate a work table in addition to counter. Both audio and video recording and duplicating may take place here. An eight by ten copy camera and equipped darkroom should be provided if funding permits.

A portion of this space or a separate area must be designed as an electronic distribution center. The "head end" of the TV antenna system or CATV system must be located in this area. Provisions should be made not only for receiving signals externally generated but also for

- redistribution of this signal to all parts of the building.
- space for equipment for recording this signal and later redistribution to the part of the school plant desired at the desired time.
- capability to distribute internally generated signals.

Storage Space

Storage space of not less than 300 square feet and up to approximately classroom size must be provided for the media center. The amount of audiovisual equipment, the number of magazine subscriptions, the use of kits and other special groups of materials kept intact will determine the amount of storage space needed. The area should be equipped with 12-inch and 15-inch deep adjustable shelving. This shelving can be double-faced and arranged in rows with four-foot aisles.

Conference Rooms

Several conference rooms will be needed in all media centers. The minimum area for a conference room should be not less than 120 square feet. It is desirable to have some of the conference rooms separated by accordion or movable partitions to allow flexible use of the space. Conference room space may be counted as part of the reading, viewing, listening (main) area as detailed under that section of this document.

Office Space

Office space sufficient to provide for the professional media staff must be provided in all schools. A separate office must be provided for the head library media specialist. An office sufficient in size to accommodate all other professional media staff may be used rather than separate offices for each. In schools with less than 300 ADA the office space could be combined with the workroom area.

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[2]*Media Programs: District and School.* American Association of School Librarians, ALA, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611, and Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1201 Sixteenth Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20036. 1975. $2.00.

SHELVING – MILLWORK – CASEWORK

General Media Shelving

Adjustable shelving must be provided for 10 items of non-print media and 10 books per pupil enrolled. Shelving for at least 20 books plus 10 to 20 non-print items per pupil is desirable. Estimate eight items per lineal foot of shelving.

The length of shelving between uprights should be three feet. The overall height of shelving in middle and high schools should not exceed six-feet four-inches and five-feet four-inches in elementary schools. Shelving should be 10 inches to 12 inches deep.

A portion of this shelving of suitable construction should be placed around the periphery of the reading/viewing/listening area. Floor shelving in this area must be avoided except where counter-height island units may be used to define subject areas or use areas.

The remainder of the shelving should be placed in a stack area which is computed separate from the reading/viewing/listening area. If desired, the construction of the shelving in this area could be different from those in the other areas, but they must be adjustable and conform to the specific dimensions given above.

Special provisions should be made for housing collections of art works, maps and charts.

One or more sections of shelving should be provided in the workroom, conference rooms and office spaces.

Storage Shelving

Shelving in the storage area must be adjustable and conform in general to the dimensions of general shelving. A small quantity should be 12 inches deep for housing back issues of magazines. The remainder should be 15 inches to 18 inches deep for housing audiovisual equipment, kits and other groups of materials kept intact. These shelves may be double faced where space and arrangement within the space permits. Sufficient space should be left free of stacks or shelving to allow for housing large equipment items on moveable carts.

Work Counters and Cabinets

Work counters with sinks must be provided in the workroom and the production area. Drawers and cabinet space should be provided in the bases of the counters.

In the workroom the counter should extend across one wall only, with shelves provided above the counter. In the production area more extensive counter space will be needed with cabinets above the counters.

Exhibit Areas

One or more lighted exhibit cases to be used in placing emphasis on items for programs of interest should be provided in the corridor near the media center entrance.

FURNISHINGS AND SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT

Reading, Viewing and Listening Areas

Standard library furniture should be scaled to accommodate the student population to be served. Carrels and individual study stations should be equipped with listening and viewing capability as well as some of the regular tables. Specialized furnishing should be provided for circulation desk; media return drop or bin; atlas and dictionary stand; vertical files and other similar cabinets; display shelves, cases, cabinets, bulletin boards.

Provisions should be made for automated procedures and computerized instruction and for housing and use of such specialized equipment as microform readers, tape and disc recorders, television receivers and film and filmstrip viewers.

Conference tables and chairs should be provided in each conference room.

Office and Workroom Area

Standard office furnishings should be provided for each office. Office furnishings including files and typewriters should be provided in the workroom for clerical staff.

Production and Electronic Distribution

In addition to the built-in cabinets provision should be made for a work table. In the electronic distribution part of this area provision must be made for the equipment necessary to facilitate the electronic distribution of externally and internally generated signals.

LIGHTING, ELECTRICAL, ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION AND MECHANICAL PROVISIONS

Lighting

The lighting for media centers shall generally conform to the requirements of established lighting standards in *A Guide for Planning and Construction of Public School Facilities in Georgia.* Installations utilizing *high efficiency* light sources in non-typical situations may be reviewed on an individual basis for approval though not entirely compliant with all provisions of the above referenced standards. Unusually high ceilings, coffered ceilings or indirect lighting systems employing one or more types of high intensity discharge sources are examples of some situations meriting special consideration. Special requirements for lighting should evolve from sufficient study of the program developed specifically for media production areas. A combination of fixed and portable lighting with maximum flexibility in controls is desirable. Consideration should be given to provision for lighting capability of any of the originating points listed under Electronics Distribution.

Electrical

Electrical equipment, wiring, outlets, switches and other devices shall generally conform to requirements for electrical installations contained in *A Guide for Planning and Construction of Public School Facilities in Georgia.*

Adequate electrical outlets and circuits must be provided in the main reading, viewing and listening room and in the conference rooms to permit simultaneous operation of several pieces of viewing and listening equipment.

Adequate electrical outlets and circuits must be provided in the media production and electronics distribution area to permit simultaneous operation of numerous pieces of equipment. Information concerning the equipment which should be available for use in this area is contained in the section of this document entitled *Component Spaces.*

Double convenience outlets should be located in all areas only after a functional layout is made not only of equipment to be initially provided but of equipment anticipated to be added.

Electronics Distribution

The "head end" of the school plant's TV antenna system or CATV system must be located in the media production area. The distribution should provide for receiving signals from all sources for recording and/or redistributing to various areas of the building. Conduits must be installed from originating points such as the gymnasium, cafetorium, one media center conference room, music rooms, multi-purpose room, arts and crafts room, language lab, auditorium and little theater to the electronics distribution area during the initial phase of construction. These conduits must be sized to accommodate two RG-6/U coaxial cables and two shielded audio part cables. Unless these cables are installed in the initial construction, adequate pull wires must be installed in the conduits for subsequent cable installation. This space must accommodate audio and video recording and playback equipment placed to receive all incoming signals and to redistribute these signals to all receiving points within the plant, either simultaneously or on a delayed replay basis from recorded sources. This area must also have the capacity to redistribute internally generated signals.

Mechanical Provisions

Heating, ventilating and air conditioning for the media center area shall generally comply with the requirements contained in the applicable section of *A Guide for Planning and Construction of Public School Facilities in Georgia.*

Temperature, ventilation and humidity control is very important to the life of the media materials as well as to the comfort of occupants.